

To: HLS, EJW, LDP

Date: July 27, 1973

From: RJN

TW 2-2

Subject: Kaiser Gypsum - St. Helens

This memo will summarize the status of the waste water treatment system at Kaiser Gypsum at St. Helens.

On July 10, 1973, Mr. Jack Cassidy, Manager of the Kaiser Gypsum, St. Helens mill, called to inform us that their June effluent monitoring report would show an average BOD discharge in excess of their 900#/day limitation. The following day, I visited the mill to determine the cause of the upset and take some samples. During this inspection, I learned that 100% of the sludge removed from the secondary clarifier was being returned to the aerated lagoon, with no provision for wasting or disposing of excess sludge. At one portion of the aerated lagoon, solids had accumulated to the point that they were above the surface of the lagoon. I indicated that there was probably an accumulation of solids in the aerated lagoon which was now beginning to affect the biological system. The company did not think this was the cause of the upset because the upset had happened so fast.

On July 12, 1973, I called Mr. Cassidy and told him to determine the depth of sludge in the lagoon and report back as soon as he could. Being out of the office for a few days, I did not get back to Mr. Cassidy until July 17, 1973, when he informed me that certain areas between the aerators did have accumulations of sludge. He said he would send in a report. (This report is attached.)

On July 20, 1973, Larry Patterson and I visited the plant to determine if there was an acceptable area at the plant site for disposing of the solids. I informed Mr. Merle Kontny, Technical Supervisor, that the company had better begin making plans to dig a holding pond and pump out the accumulated solids.

On July 24, 1973, I called Mr. Cassidy to tell him to start removing the solids. I also indicated that the staff would survey Scappoose Bay the next day to determine its water quality. I pointed out that, should water quality standards be violated, curtailment of production would be required.

During the survey on the following day, it was observed that Kaiser Gypsum had dug a holding pond and had begun pumping solids into it. The survey showed good D.O.'s (lowest was 6.3 at the mouth of Scappoose Bay), and reasonably good water quality considering the water body. It was decided that production curtailment was not warranted.

I intend to revisit the plant today with LDP to check on the progress. In the near future, I will draft a letter to Kaiser Gypsum requesting an engineering report prior to January 1, 1974, outlining a plan for initiating a solids disposal program.

RJN:ljb

Attachment

USEPA SF



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